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ABSTRACT

NATIONAL SURVEYS OF JUNIOR COLLEGE PRESIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES WERE CONDUCTED OVER A 3-YEAR PERIOD. IT WAS FELT THAT BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE POSITION WOULD IMPROVE TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR JUNIOR COLLEGE PRESIDENTS. DATA WERE GATHERED FROM THE PRESIDENTS, THEIR WIVES, THE SECOND HIGHEST ADMINISTRATORS OF THE COLLEGES, THE PRESIDENTS' SECRETARIES, AND THE PRESIDENTS OF FACULTY ASSOCIATIONS. THE STUDY ANTICIPATED THREE BASIC SITUATIONS FOR THE JUNIOR COLLEGE PRESIDENT: (1) ARRIVAL AS PRESIDENT; (2) SURVIVAL AS PRESIDENT; AND (3) LEAVING THE PRESIDENCY. IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR JUNIOR COLLEGE PRESIDENTS SHOULD INCLUDE MANAGERIAL SKILLS AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS. THE AUTHOR RECOMMENDS A BUSINESS MINOR FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS MAJORING IN JUNIOR COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION. (MS)

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IMPLICATIONS FOR THE JUNIOR COLLEGE LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM DRAWN FROM A CONTINUING STUDY OF THE TWO YEAR COLLEGE PRESIDENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
1.	The problem	1
2.	Background	1
3.	Limitations	2
4.	Scope and method	3
5.	Related literature	4
6.	Operational definitions.....	5
7.	Selected results of the surveys	7
8.	General conclusions	15
9.	Bibliography	17

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE JUNIOR COLLEGE LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM DRAWN FROM A CONTINUING STUDY OF THE TWO YEAR COLIEGE PRESIDENT

The problem. A better understanding of the two year college presidency is needed. Such an understanding could contribute to training programs established to produce two year college administrators.

Background: The two year college responds to different social aspirations than other American educational institutions. Further these aspirations are expressed in educational goals which are approached by different methods and from a different philosophical basis than found at other institutions. Therefore, and this is the underlying assumption of this paper, the two year college presidency can not be directly compared with other chief administrative positions in either the university or the common school district. The second assumption is that meaningful commonalities can be deduced from the practices of presidents which are amenable to descriptions useful in training programs of would be presidents or other two year college administrators. Such descriptions will necessarily involve a study of the attitudes and opinions of the people who become two year college presidents as well as their impressions of what it is they do along with the impressions of others of what it is a president is and does.

Limitations. The American two year college presidency varies greatly by administrative design and practice at all levels of organization -- campus to campus in a multicampus district, district to district where these are organized within States and from State to State. The office will vary also as each college adapts to the immediate circumstances of the community supporting it. Further variation is introduced by the nature of the people elected to the office and the subsequent effect of the college on the president. Therefore it would be difficult, if not dangerous, to generalize too freely from the experiences of any one president. As what follows in this paper is really a compilation of individual experiences and recommendations, it is cautioned that the sum may not reflect anything remotely associated with appropriate behavior for any specific situation. The study does not pretend to be so sophisticated as to be prescriptive; it is only descriptive.

Further it is not suggested here that there is necessarily a "best" training program to prepare a person for the presidency. Pray has observed that there is no such thing as "the" junior college but rather that there are "individual institutions."[1] And as President Sahling, Quinnipiac College, Connecticutt observed in response to a request to rank in order the best training in preparation for a presidency:[2]

There is no such thing! It's like accounting for

1. Pray, Francis C. "A PR Trilogy", Junior College Journal: V. 34:16, March 1964.
2. Morgan, D.A. The Two Year College President. Chapter One, "So You've Arrived! Now what do you do?" Moses Lake, Washington: Big Bend College. Mimeographed report. 1966.

> women!' One of the finest college presidents comes from a position as director of a historical foundation and its museum, but how many have that kind of background?"

The wide variation found in comparing two year colleges with each other is further compounded as any single college changes with the result there is a corresponding change in the particular administrative leadership needed from time to time and from situation to situation. However just as it is not possible to prepare potential teachers for every variation of child, situation and time, the training program for would-be teachers is not abolished. Similarly with the two year college presidency, just because the position is difficult to assess and describe with uniformity does not mean attempts to understand it should be abandoned.

Scope and Method. This paper is based on national surveys of "all" American two year college presidents conducted over the past three years. Simple inquiry was made of the experiences, attitudes and opinions of presidents and other key persons regarding the nature and conduct of the office of the presidency.

As a newly elected president, the writer turned to the literature for accounts of experiences of two-year presidents. Little was found, and the surveys started subsequently were motivated simply by the desire to find out more about the position by asking those most closely associated with it - other presidents. The project subsequently involved, at one time or another, or at least attempted to on five different questionnaires, all the presidents of two year colleges in the country.

Later surveys gathered additional opinions about the presidency from: the wives of presidents, the second man in the administrative organization of the college as designated by the president, the president's secretary and the president of the most representative faculty association at the college. Also involved were a select group of twelve presidents, nominated by their colleagues and peers as being highly successful as presidents, and eleven of them have been interviewed with the emphasis on present practices of presidents and future problems facing the next generation of presidents.

Related literature. Not much has been published in the permanent literature directly concerned with the two year college presidency. Probably the most extensive examination of the office ever made was at the recent National Conference at the University of California, Los Angeles, which was devoted entirely to the subject of the presidency.[3] The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) at the University of California, Los Angeles, also published a specialized bibliography, The College President in May 1968 and an article, "The Junior College President" in June 1968. O'Connell devoted a chapter of his book to the presidency, also published in 1968.[4]

In the opinion of the writer two errors regarding the presidency are found in the literature. O'Connell insisted the community college president has a job not unlike that of the four year or university president, and the writer cannot agree

3. Johnson, B.Lamar, editor: The Junior College President. Los Angeles: University of California, School of Education, Junior College Leadership Program, Occasional Report #___ (in press and anticipated out in early 1969).
4. O'Connell, Thomas. Community Colleges, a President's View. Urbana: University of Illinois, May 1968.

with this position and takes the position that the differences are many but no where more clearly seen than in the postures of the different colleges towards the immediate community. Whereas the university attempts to maintain some form of the mideaval wall isolating it from the community, the community college has calculatedly refused to build walls and has invited the community in. This subjects the president of such an institution to a whde new set of pressures simply as he is expected to defend academic freedom and other hallowed rights without the benefit of walls or distance. The second error, and one regretably perpetuated in this paper, is to make generalizations about the two year college from data collected on Western publicly supported community colleges as well as on Eastern privately supported junior colleges. And while Notre Dame and the University of California are both institutions of higher learning, the presidents serving them are faced with entirely different situations and responsibilities. Future study of the presidency of two year colleges will benefit from better operational definitions than now exist.

Operational definitions. What is a two year college president? The president is defined here as that official responsible for the operation of a college. He may, in fact, be called a dean or director and may or may not report to a policy board t hrough another administrative unit. The requirement is that the president is the one who is directly responsible for the day to day operations on a campus. Included in this definition are persons responsible to superintendents and to universities, those responsible to private foundations and

religous orders. The president is not the chief administrator of a multi-campus two year college distriet unless the district administrator retains day to day control over the college on any campus.

The writer is not happy with this definition. The suggestion is made that there are in reality several distinct kinds of presidents which must be studied separately. The first distinction would be on the basis of fiscal responsibility. The Oregon president of a small college who has to present his budget to the people for an election every year and in which there will be provisions for income from a local levy for operational expenses is faced with an entirely different responsibility and position than is the president of a large urban college in a multi-college district who gets his money from the central office. It may be that a distinction should be made on the basis of size or on the basis of urban versus rural. Total agreement is given Coultas's point that the concentration of minority groups in urban centers as a single factor makes a vast difference between small-rural and large-urban operation.[5] Certainly there should be a clear distinction between public and privately supported colleges. The functions of a private two year college president as a fund raiser

are likely to be forever foreign to the president of a State supported two year college.[6] Also it would seem a reasonable generalization that the private colleges are geared more closely to the university program as the prime

5. Coultas, W.T. "Problems of Urban Colleges", Junior College Journal: V. 35:13-16, October 1964.

function of the college than is true of the publicly supported colleges, particularly those describing themselves as community colleges.

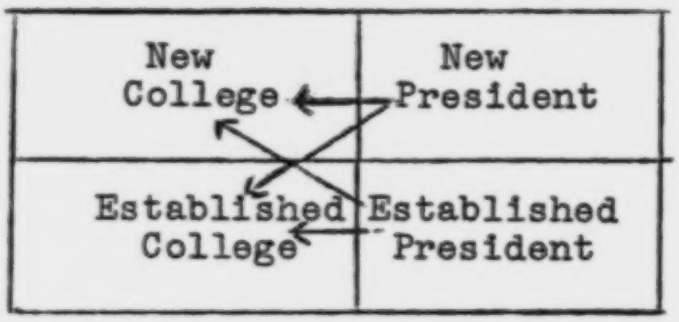
What is a two year college? The junior-community-two year college is here defined as including post-secondary institutions which maybe known otherwise as junior colleges, community colleges, vocational-technical institutes and two-year extension centers of universities, but the definition is not limited to these specific types. Central to the definition is that the college views itself as a two year college. As such it can be expected to represent itself in either or both of two publications: 1. The Annual Directory of the American Association of Junior Colleges; or 2. The College Fact Chart. Excluded by definition are single purpose proprietary schools such as beauty,barber, business and electronic colleges, though it is recognized the line gets blurry when a vocational-technical institute program in secretarial science is compared with that of a business college.

Selected results of the surveys. Much information was included from the surveys in two addresses given at the National Conference concerned with the presidency. One address was on the topic of the role and responsibility of the president. The other was given on the topic of the role and responsibility of the president's wife, referred to as "the first lady."[7] The paper at hand seeks not to duplicate items included in these addresses, but for cohesion occassional departure from this guideline has been necessary.

7. Johnson, (ibid)

The study initially anticipated three basic situations unfolding for a newly elected president: 1. arrival as president; 2. survival as president; and 3. leaving the presidency. The first questionnaire to other presidents was titled, "So You've Arrived! Now What do You Do?" It was concerned with what the newly elected president might best do immediately after election but before assuming his position as well as with what he ought to do immediately upon arrival at the college.

The situations anticipated in combination might be viewed this way:



Each of the four possible combinations presents a completely different situation to the arriving president. A new president arriving to found a college is himself a part of the situation in quite different ways than the established president who arrives to found a college, etc.

The leadership training programs for two year college administrators should probably be more concerned with the two possible situations facing a new president. The general conclusions in the report written on information yielded by the first questionnaire may be of some interest in this regard. The information came from 416 responses or 60% of the 700 presidents included in the first mailing.

The conclusions:

The first thing anewly elected president should do befcre assuming his position is to visit with the faculty and administrators.

The first thing a new president should do upon assuming his position is to cal l (ask for) a general faculty meeting.

The best training in preparation for a presidency is as head school administrator. The best level for this experience is in the junior-community college.

The second man in the colle ge administration is best able to help the new president get acclima ted. A distant, but strong, second was the former president±s secretary.

Of 392 presidents answering this particular question, 315 were in their first presidency and had been for an average of 7.2 years.

May presidents recommended it is well to move at first with caution from a position of knowledge. This is, of course, completely relative.

It is suggested that the dominant factors which must be considered by the new president in assessing what is to be done will be at least: 1. the age, health and vigor of the college; 2. the age, health and vigor of the community; 3. the goals and aspirations of each; 4. the quality of the faculty and its relationships to administration and board; 5. the breadth of the curriculum; and 6. the condition of finances and the method of financing. The combinations and permutations of these, and possibly other pertinent factors,are enormously complicated in reality.

An often overlooked consideration is that the president should assess himself. This would be in specific reference to why he sought to be a president and how he got to be apresident. If the individual is not aware of his own ego and security

needs, there is danger that the person can fall prey to those who might gain an awareness of them and use them to advantage.

It is strongly urged that a newly elected president plan a stategy for arrival at the college. If the sought after arrival is one of calm and quietude with the least disturbance to an on-going operation, this can probably be accomplished, but it will be best accomplished if it results from planning. It may be the sought after effect will be a full blown inauguration with an academic procession, etc. However approached, it is urged that the new president think through the possible impacts his mode of arrival might have on his future effectiveness.

Planning for survival in the position is another matter. One questionnaire sent to the field asked all presidents to name the most successful president they had ever known, then to think of the president who had had the most difficulty of any they had ever known, and then to give the most important ingredients for success and the sources of greatest difficulty.

The most important ingredients for success were: (138 responses)

1. human relations skills
2. administrative skills
3. intelligence
4. personal leadership ability
5. philsophical commitment and dedication.

The sources of greatest difficulty were:

1. faculty - recruitment, militancy, dissension among
2. lack of human relations skills
3. finances, fund raising, budget
4. lack of administrative skill, training or experience
5. poor board or poor board relations

These findings were not substantially different from those

taken from a questionaire sent to the wives of two year college presidents. They had been asked, "What single characteristic contributed most to your husband's becoming a president?", and the principal responses were: (from 154 responses)

1. the five D's (drive,determination,devotion, desire, dedication)
2. personality and ability to work with people
3. administrative or organizational skills
4. training, record, experience
5. intelligence

From the next question, "What single characteristic contributed most to your husband's success in staying on as president?", the principal responses were:

1. ability to work with people
2. the 5 D's (drive,etc.)
3. administrative ability and training
4. honesty,fairness, integrity
5. hard work

From the interviews conducted with the eleven of the twelve presidents named most often by their peers and colleagues as being successful, it was clear they anticipated the pressures on the president to increase in the future. The principal sources of these pressures were nearly unanimously given as: 1. faculty; 2. finances; and 3. communication with students and community. One of the presidents noted that of the first two problems, faculty and finances, finances would actually be the toughest to deal with technically, but as the faculty is composed of emotional people, the hardest to live with will be faculty problems as objectivity will be difficult to maintain.

It is the opinion of the writer that new presidents will have to be more nearly managers such as found in large business firms. The distance from the president to the faculty and students

will continue to widen. Administrat ors will deal more and more with the faculty through legal advisers and negotiation teams, if at all. It is possi ble,however, that the rise of the "chancellor" of a multi-college district which is where "the buck stops" may give a reprieve to the campus president. If the campus president can not be held for district policies, and if he is not directly responsible tothe board,it may be he will be able to retai n the posture of the le ader of the faculty. In those colleges where the president answers directly to the board and ma kes specific recommendations relative to faculty welfare,it is doubtful if this posture can be maintained.

At two recent regional meetings involving some numbers of presidents of two year colle ges, the writer could not help but get involved in several discussions with presidents longing for "the good old days" before faculty and student activism changed administative practices so greatly. For those who are unhappy now, it is chilling news that these pressures are likely to increase. The day is gone forever when the president can eme rge from the broom closet clutching next years budget or this years schedule of classes.

After arrival,the new president enters what is known among administrators as "the honeymoon" period. The length of this will depend on many things, but it eventual ly ends for nearly all presidents. At the end of it, the president of tomorrow will need some hard, cold skills with money and some warm, soft skills with people in order to survive. Fred Giles, past President of Everett Junior College, Washington, and now Dean of the College of Education at the University of Washington,

has been known to observe on occassion that for the first year a new president is eulogized, the second year he is scrutinized, the third year he is criticized, and the fourth year he is mesmerized.

The third aspect of the study was concerned with leaving the presidency. A questionnaire was sent to all presidents in the attempt to determine why it is that presidents leave the position and where it is they go when they do leave. 360 presidents responded, and 287 of them had had predecessors at the college they then served. In answer to the question, what happened to the predecessors, the principal responses were:

1. retired
2. moved to another presidency
3. moved to four year college or university
4. left education for other pursuits
5. went to a junior college but not as president
6. died in office.

When asked, why did the preceding president leave, the responses:

1. were offered a "better" position
2. were under pressure to leave
3. reached retirement age
4. died
5. left for health reasons.

If the predecessor left under pressure, from where did it come was the next question. The principal responses:

1. the board
2. the faculty
3. organized elements in the community

4. from within the administration

5. from State Department of Education.

The presidents were also asked what would be their principal motivation for leaving the presidency should they choose to do so. The principal responses:

1. advancement, better or more challenging position
2. too much present responsibility or pressure
3. to take another position in education
4. health, age, retirement reasons
5. restriction and the need for more personal life.

The wives of presidents were also asked, would you prefer the president had another position? The results:

1. yes 27
2. maybe 7
3. no 10

Asked, do you think the president will want another position eventually? The results:

1. yes 53
2. maybe 23
3. no 53

Then if the answer to the above was "yes", what to you think the president would want to do? The results:

1. professor
2. teacher-instructor
3. larger two year college president
4. four year college presidency
5. would want merely a change of scene

It would appear wives of two year college presidents do not want their husbands to leave the position and that they regard a return to the classroom as the major attraction for the president should he leave the presidency.

The third problem area of the future as specified by the eleven successful presidents, that of communications, is an extremely critical one for the new president to understand. As noted in the address on the role and responsibility of the president at the National Conference:[8]

> The junior college president's principal rle is that of leader. His responsibility, therefore, is to offer leadership. This is exerted on an increasingly important institution which is developing rapidly within the American educational system. However,if the leader and leadership offered are to be effective, they must be acceptable to the society supporting them and to the specific institution being led.
>
> If effective leadership is to be established and accepted, it is necessary for the president to understand, represent and interpret an educational philosophy. This involves, in reality, little actual philosophizing and much hard work, and it must be done in a fashion where communication is achieved.
>
> The president's understanding of and ability to interpret the educational philosophy of the two year college in terms consisten with the aspirations of the community served will determine the goals and purposes for the specific college or institution served. The goals, once established, are then accomodated through the design of educational practices and settings which allow the relative accomplishment or achievement of them. These practices and settings are established through administrative processes, the efficiency of which will depend upon the organizational and intellectual skills and talents of the leader and the quality of the leadership.
>
> Effectiveness of a president is measured inevitably and properly by the society providing the wealth. Society has been led to expect certain results are possible as a result of its investment. That it expects them to be achieved is reasonable and proper.

The writer's concern for the fate of the two year college is centered on honesty within administration. It is one thing to describe an institution as having an "open door", as offering a "comprehensive program" and as being the "peoples' college." It is quite another thing to actually accomplish these things. Involved here is a concern for our profound ignorance of ourselves

8. Johnson (ibid)

as relates to the most basic processes. Do we indeed teach? Is what is taught of value? Is what is taught relevant? If entry skills into an occupational area are the goals of a class, do the successful students in the class actually find jobs in those areas and how welldo they do in their own views and in the views of the employer? Evaluation need not be confused with research in the sense of advancing the body of knowledge found in a descrete discipline, but evaluation is the only way to attempt answers to these sorts of questions. The two year college has <u>not</u> been of a mind to evaluate itself, but it is certain that a trusting public will some day ask for a reckoning. On that future day, answers and not platitudes and promises will be most helpful. The new generation of presidents must come to understand this need and be trained to implement and guide needed evaluations.

<u>GENERAL CONCLUSIONS:</u>

A survey of the attitudes and opinions of two year college president regarding what it is that presidents do, or should do, in three situations has been presented. The three situations were: 1. a strategy for arrival as president; 2. a strategy for survival as president; and 3. a strategy for leaving the presidency. Emphasis was on what new presidents should consider or know upon being elected president. It is the conclusion of the paper than training programs for junior college administrators should include in addition to the history and philosophy of the two year college movement some considerable opportunity to learn big business managerial skills which would include sensitivity training regarding the needs of modern

employees. A sharp focus should be made on school law, specifically as this relates to faculty bargaining and other rights. It is recommended that serious consideration be given the requirement that doctoral students planning to work in two year college administration take a minor from the College of Business. With the business minor there should be some attention to the principles of finance.

Also needed in two year college administrator training programs is a sharper focus on the process of evaluation. Ultimately evaluation is a tool of supervision, would be the position taken here, and it will take administrators who understand this and who can implement evaluation processes to formulate answers to questions which can be expected to come from the public. This evaluation should not be confused with research as conducted at a university, but should be looked at as self-analysis.

Regarding future studies of the presidency of the two year colleges it is strongly urged that better operational definitions regarding what is a president and what is a two year college be established than was done here. It is thought this might be approached by dividing presidents into distinct types: 1. on the basis of ultimate fiscal responsibility; 2. on the basis of public versus private financing; and 3. on the basis of large-urban and small-rural.

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